

Joint Subcommittee on Natural Resources and Transportation
Montana Department of Agriculture Responses
HB 375 Meeting
February 8, 2011

Response to Posed Questions

- What is the department's role in preventing ANS spread?
The primary prevention role the department has is education and awareness through conducting inspection stations on recreational vehicles at major entry points into the State of Montana. Other activities include education and outreach, survey/monitoring efforts, and response to infestations.
- What is the department's role in responding to ANS infestation?
The primary ANS species that the department addresses are aquatic invasive plants that are listed as noxious weeds. However, the department would also play a role in addressing other ANS infestations that impact or relate to agriculture such as irrigation. For ANS issues that fall within FWP jurisdiction and for which there is limited impact to agriculture, the department is prepared to offer assistance that FWP may need.

Counties are the lead, under the Montana County Weed Act, in addressing all noxious weeds, both terrestrial and aquatic. The department facilitates cooperation and collaboration between counties, landowners, and others and supports county efforts. The department's Noxious Weed Summit Advisory Council is serving in an advisory capacity as the statewide Eurasian Watermill Foil Task Force. Some of the activities of the task force and the department include development of a statewide aquatic plant plan and addressing permit and environmental assessment requirements.

The department established a management area for Eurasian watermilfoil for Noxon/Cabinet Gorge bodies of water. Given the findings of EWM in the Missouri River mainstem and Ft. Peck Reservoir this past year, the department is seriously considering the development of a statewide management area. Along with the Noxon/Cabinet Gorge management area designation, the department has and will continue conducting mandatory inspection stations and education in that area of the Clark Fork River.

The department has developed a monitoring program for the Jefferson and Madison Rivers for aquatic invasive plants. In addition, the department will be working on cooperative survey and monitoring effort with counties and state and federal agencies.

- What is the department's role in public education?
Collaborative development of the Public Information Plan with FWP
Legislative newsletters (2 in 2010)
Education materials have been distributed to weed districts, conservation districts, tribes, extension service and other interested parties in 2009 and 2010
Aquatic invasive plant training (identification, management, response) was/is being held in February of 2011
Aquatic invasive plant training (survey, monitoring) will be held in 2010 and 2011
Development and distribution of 120 aquatic plant sampling kits (tubs) for counties, tribes, state agencies, and others
Nursery and Pet Store education and outreach to occur in 2011

Invasive species incorporated into trainings (such as pesticide training), in general outreach of the Pest Management Bureau whose focus is pests of concern to Montana, presentations at a variety of meetings, and into events (fairs, schools, community)

- Define what types of coordination have been accomplished with other government or non-government organizations?

Programmatic Coordination, Collaboration, and Support

Plan Development:

Montana Strategic Plan For Invasive Aquatic Plant Management and Resource Protection (through NWSAC as Task Force), draft January 2011

Montana Invasive Species Strategic Plan (from Summit held in October 2010)

Montana Aquatic Invasive Executive Summary (with FWP), December 2010

Montana Noxious Weed Management Plan (with the weed community), 2008

Support of Local Efforts: Flathead Basin Commission – support of local efforts

Avista – management of EWM, monitoring, inspection stations

Weed Districts/Counties: Lewis and Clark, Beaverhead, Valley, Broadwater, Gallatin, Mineral, Ravalli, Lincoln, Sanders (monitoring, response, education/outreach, permitting, EA)

State Agencies – DNRC (as landowner and partner), DEQ (on permits and EA), FWP (as partner), DOT (inspection station signage, Highway border signage, logistics planning for inspection stations)

Federal Agencies – Corps of Engineers (response), CBP (coordination of IS efforts), USDA (grants – received; partner in coordination efforts through committee)

Other states – Idaho – collaborative efforts; work with western states; discussion with Wyoming for same

Invasive Species Summit in October 2010 (multiple state and federal agencies, industries, and the public)

<u>Short Term Funding</u>	<u>Amount</u>	<u>Comment</u>
Invasive Species Funding	\$667,000	2009, 2010
Noxious Weed Trust Fund	\$362,279	EWM (2007-2010); \$145,000 requested in 2011
Other – MDA In-House	\$58,176	Department paid inspection station operations; Aquatic sampling/surveying tubs; boat for surveying; billboard; education/outreach
DNRC (Emergency Response Funds)	\$40,000	\$12,500 in 2010; remainder to be used in 2011
DNRC (grants to be applied for)	\$40,000	Planning grant and management grant
DOT (Signage)	\$20,905	Inspection Stations and MT border signage
Local Efforts	\$29,000	Avista – \$15,000, mgmt area inspection station Grant to Flathead Basin Commission – \$8,000 Grant to Sanders County – \$6,000, equipment
Idaho	\$30,000	Inspection station operation